MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. U. VENKATESWARLU): I lay on the Table, a copy each (in English and Hindi) of the following papers:—

(i) (a) Annual Report and Accounts of the National Institute of Urban Affairs, New Delhi for the year 1995-96, together with the Auditors' Report on the Accounts.

(b) Statement by Government accepting the above Report.

(c) Statement giving reasons for the delay in laying the papers mentioned at(a) above.

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT-1379/97].

(ii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of India (Ministry of Urban Affairs and Employment) and National Buildings Construction Corporation Limited, for the year 1996-97.

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT-1378/97].

NOMINATION OF PANEL OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have to inform Members that Hon. Chairman has nominated Mr. V. Narayanasamy and Mr. Ajit P.K. Jogi to function as Vice-Chairman during the current session of the Rajya Sabha.

RE. DISCRETIONARY QUOTA OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT FOR TELEPHONE AND GAS CONNECTIONS

प्रो॰ विजय कुमार मल्होत्रा (दिल्ली): उपसभापति महोदया ...

उपसभापति: आप किस विषय पर बोल रहे हैं?

प्रो॰ विजय कुमार मल्होत्रा: महोदया, सांसदों का गैस और टेलीफोन्स का कोटा खत्म कर दिया गया है।

उपसभापति: यहां नहीं लिखा है।

प्रो॰ विजय कुमार मल्होत्रा: महोदया, यह तो खत्म हुआ है परंतु हमें इनफार्मेशन नहीं है कि क्या मिनिस्ट्र का कोटा भी खत्म हुआ है या नहीं हुआ है? सेक्रेटरीज़ का कोटा खत्म हुआ है या नहीं हुआ है और ये जो ऑफिशियल्स हैं, ब्यूरोक्रेट्स हैं, ये भी तो गैस और टेलीफोन के कनेक्शन दे रहे हैं। मैम्बर्स का कोटा खत्म कर दें, इसमें हमें कोई ऐतराज़ नहीं है लेकिन मिनिस्टर्स सेक्रेटरीज़ या ब्यूरोक्रेट्स का कोटा खत्म किया गया है या नहीं? मैम्बर्स का तो गैस और टेलीफोन का कोटा खत्म कर दिया गया है, ऐसा स्पीकर साहब ने लोक सभा में घोषित किया है। मैं इसका कोई विरोध नहीं कर रहा हूं

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY (Andhra Pradesh): They take away Members' privilege and the officials have unlimited privilege.

प्रो॰ विजय कुमार मल्होत्रा: आप इसको मिनिस्ट्र से शुरू करिए और सेक्रेटरीज़ से शुरू करिए। मैंने देखा है कि सेक्रेटरीज़ सैकड़ों की तादाद में ये कनेक्शन देते हैं, मामूली से मामूली अफसर कनेक्शन दे रहे हैं उनको परमीशन है पर सिर्फ मैम्बर्स का डिसक्रीशन कोटा खत्म करना ठीक नहीं है। उनका कोटा खत्म कर भी शुरू करिए और यहां हाऊस में बताइए कि इस बाद यह कोटा न कोई मिनिस्टर यूज़ करेगा, न कोई अ करेगा। सिर्फ फर्स्ट कम फर्स्ट सर्व के बेसिस पर ही कनेक्शन दिए जाएंगे।

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL (Rajasthan): Madam, there is one more point to be considered by you and the whole House. A unilateral announcement has been made in the Lok Sabha. It is applicable to the Members of the Rajya Sabha?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is not the point.

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: There should be some consultation between the Rajya Sabha and the Lok Sabha and with our hon. Chairman and our hon. leader as well. It has been suddenly announced but is it applicable to the Members of the Rajya Sabha? If it is, since when will it be applicable—April or July?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: One minute Sikander Sahib, let me hear what Agarwal Saheb is saying. ..*(Interruptions)*... Sometimes matters are raised in the House and Whoever is in the Chair makes a comment. This matter was raised in the Lok Sabha and the honourable Speaker gave his comments and the Petroleum Minister was there. I don't think it is a policy which was decided unilaterally. I don't think it was that way. Now, Prof. Malhotraji had raised a few points. The Petroleum Minister is here; we would find out from him what the position is.

SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES (Goa): Madam, It cannot be done on a partisan basis. What is the status of the common man? The poor people who need LPG connection would not be getting because LPG connections would be cornered by the rich people by paying Rs. 4,000 on *tatkal* basis. It is not a good policy of the Government.

विपक्ष के नेता (श्री सिकन्दर बख्त: सदर साहिबा, मैं कहना चाह रहा था...

†[آنریبل سکندر بخت: صدر صاحبہ۔ میں کہنا چاہ رہا تھا...]

उपसभापति: मैं आपको भी सुनूंगी। यह अपनी बात कह ले फिर आपको बुलाऊंगी।

SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES: LPG connections are needed by the poor people because the Government has put a ban on the use of firewood. Is it a good policy of the Government? The Government would sell LPG connections to the people who have money. The Government is going to sell LPG connection at Rs. 4,000 on *tatkal* basis. So, I don't think it is a proper policy of the Government to deprive the poor people who are standing in the queue. They should go according to the queue. The priority

†[ ] Transliteration in Arabic Script.

श्री सिकन्दर बख्त: सदर साहिबा, मैं सिर्फ यह कहना चाहता हूं कि मैंने जब आज सुबह अखबार में पढ़ा तो मैं इख्तियारात से वाकिफ हूं कि किसके क्या इख्तियारात हैं। किस किस्म का बयान गवर्नमेंट से आना चाहिए था या किसी और जगह से आना चाहिए था। मैं बिल्कुल समझने से कासिर हूं और मैं हैरान हुआ हूं कि वह तो बयान नहीं था। आपने "कमेंट" शब्द का इस्तेमाल किया है।

†[آنریبل سکندر بخت: صدر صاحبہ۔ میں صرف یہ کہنا چاہتا ہوں کہ میں نے جب آج صبح اخبار میں پڑھا تو میں اختیارات سے واقف ہوں کہ کسکے کیا اختیارات ہیں اس قسم کا بیان گورنمنٹ سے آنا چاہیئے تھا کس اور جگہ سے آنا چاہیئے تھا۔ میں بالکل سمجھنے سے قاصر ہوں۔ اور میں حیران ہوں کہ وہ تو بیان نہیں تھا آپنے کمینٹ شبد کا استعمال کیا ہے۔]

Comments are fine. Comments always come from the Chair.

پر یہ کہ حکم کی شکل میں اس چیز کی بات کہاں سے آئے، اسکی ایہتیات جروری ہے، یہ میں کہنا چاہتا ہوں۔

†[] پر یہ کہ حکم کی شکل میں اس قسم کی بات کہاں سے کرتے۔ اسلئے احتیاط ضروری ہے۔ یہ میں کہنا چاہتا ہوں۔]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): Madam Deputy Chairman, actually the Government did not interfere with the decision of the Speaker ... (*Interruptions*)..

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let us listen to him. First let us listen to him.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: As per the directions of the Speaker of the Lok Sabha—as far as Members of the Lok Sabha are concerned—issuing of 25 coupons every three months should be done away with. If any decision is taken by this House or by the Deputy Chairman, we would definitely consider it. ... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT: What about Ministers' quota? यह क्या तमाशा हो रहा है? ...(व्यवधान)... यह क्या बात हुई?

†[] یہ کیا تماشہ ہو رہا ہے "مداخلت" یہ کیا بات ہوئی۔]

I could not understand. मैं दूसरी बात कर रहा हूं। यह क्या कह रहे हैं?

†[] میں دوسری بات کر رہا ہوں۔ یہ کیا کہہ رہے ہیں۔]

SHRI MD. SALIM (West Bengal): Madam, I am on a point of procedure. ..(*Interruptions*)..

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He was already speaking. Let him finish. He is standing. Let him say what he wants to say. Then, you may react.

†[] Transliteration in Arabic Script.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Madam, th Minister has got no discretionary quot As far as the CMDs of the public sectc units are concerned, they have got som discretion to give 100 or 200 connection mainly for the promotion of their pro ducts. If you decide that this also shoulc be done away with, we can consider that As far as the Ministers are concerned, there is no discretionary quota.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Baalu, the problem is, here Members feel that their quota is being withdrawn. They want to know whether Ministers' quota is also being withdrawn because ... (*Interruptions*) ...

SHRI T.R. BAALU: There is no Ministers' quota. ... (*Interruptions*) ... There is no discretionary quota for the Ministers. ..(*Interruptions*).

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA (Karnatak): Madam, I am raising a fundamental question. Please give me a chance. There are two Houses of Parliament. And if there are any benefits enjoyed by Members of Parliament, I do not think one House can unilaterally decide that they must be withdrawn for both the Houses. I feel that it would be improper for the Lok Sabha—I am not bringing in any kind of personalities into this—to take a unilateral decision that they must be withdrawn. There has been no consultation with the Rajya Sabha or with the chairman. We have just checked up. Nor has there been a Joint Committee of the two Houses to look into this issue. I feel that each House has got its own Presiding Officer and its own system of functioning. How can one House unilaterally announce that this facility for Members of Parliament is being withdrawn without the Rajya Sabha being consulted? We may agree or we may disagree. That is not the point. I think it is not proper for us to give up the convention of both the Houses having a say on the privileges enjoyed by Members of parliament. Our rights as Members of the Rajya Sabha cannot be just treated as if they do not exist. And we cannot be

treated as if we are an appendage to the other House. I am not on the question whether it is right or wrong to give quota. You may agree or you may disagree. But I think the decision should have been taken jointly. A Joint Committee or, maybe, the Chairman should also have been involved. (*Interruptions*).

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: There are other matters which I have to take up. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA (Bihar): Madam, he cannot answer. The Parliamentary Affairs Minister will answer. Telephones are also there.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Telephones are also involved.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order. Order in the House, please.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Madam, the hon. Speaker of the Lok Sabha had convened an all-party leaders' meeting before the start of the current Session in his Chamber. At that time, Congress leaders were there; hon. Mr. Vajpayee was there; and many of the leaders were there. (*Interruptions*). There was a consensus. (*Interruptions*).

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Leaders of the Telugu Desam in both the Houses. ...(*Interruptions*).

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY (Andhra Pradesh): I was not there.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: The leader of the Shiv Sena objected.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA (West Bengal): Madam, what happened in the Chamber of the Speaker should not be discussed here.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It cannot be discussed here. I suggest. ...(*Interruptions*). Everybody should sit down. We cannot discuss these things on the floor of the House. I will not permit it. I will speak to the Speaker and find out the details. Let the Chairman decide what he wants to do. But we cannot take up this matter here. (*Interruptions*). That matter is now closed.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Madam, I want to say something else. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT: If it is an executive order, who has to do it? Let us know.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Sikander Saheb, we cannot take a decision on the floor of the House. It is not possible.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Madam, I am on the definition, inter-pretation, of 'Ministers' discretionary quota'. The Supreme Court's interpretation of 'Ministers' discretionary quota' ...(*Interruptions*). 'Ministers' discretionary quota' is not equal to 'privilege of Members of Parliament'. That is the point I am making. How is it that a decision has been taken by the Supreme Court regarding the privilege of Members of Parliament? It is our privilege. It has nothing to do with. ...(*Interruptions*).

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: She is speaking. How can you speak on two channels at the same time? Let her finish. (*Interruptions*). Okay. Now, that matter is closed. No more comments on this matter till the matter is put before the Chairman. That is closed. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT: Nobody is commenting. We are enquiring.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is over, Sikander Bakht Saheb. You have enquired and that is enough. I cannot allow any more discussion on this. (*Interruptions*). Shri Sudhir Ranjan Majumdar.

RE. GRAVE SITUATION IN TRIPURA, ASSAM AND NAGALAND

SHRI SUDHIR RANJAN MAJUMDAR (Tripura): Madam Deputy Chairman, Tripura has an age-long tradition of maintaining peace and harmony among different tribes and communities living side by side in perfect harmony. But the